

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A medical testing system comprising:
 - (a) an instrument for monitoring a characteristic of a patient; and
 - (b) an illuminating component for illuminating the instrument, the instrument including:
 - (1) a component for selectively activating and deactivating the illuminating component; and
 - (2) a deactivating component for automatically deactivating the illuminating component, after a predetermined period of time has elapsed.
- 10 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the instrument includes a work surface and the illuminating component illuminates the work surface.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein the instrument further includes a keypad and the illuminating component illuminates the keypad.
- 15 4. The system of claim 1, wherein the component for selectively activating and deactivating includes a toggle switch.
5. The system of claim 1, wherein the instrument includes a keypad having a plurality of keys, each associated with an instruction.
- 20 6. The system of claim 5, wherein the instrument includes a determining component for determining whether a key has been pressed by a user.
7. The system of claim 6, wherein the deactivating component will automatically deactivate the illuminating component if a key has not been pressed by a user for the predetermined period of time.
- 25 8. A medical testing method comprising the steps of: activating an illuminating component positioned relative to an instrument for monitoring a characteristic of a patient, the instrument including a keypad having a plurality of keys;

determining if a key on the plurality of keys has been pressed by a user; and

automatically deactivating the illuminating component if a key of the plurality of keys has not been pressed within a predetermined period of time.

5. 9. The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of deactivating the illuminating component when a toggle key has been pressed.

10. 10. The method of claim 8, wherein the characteristic is the electrical activity of the heart of the patient.

11. 11. The method of claim 8, wherein the determining step includes the step 10 of scanning the keypad for sensing if a key has been pressed by a user.

12. 12. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of starting a timer, after the activating step, for timing the predetermined period of time.

13. 13. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of stopping the timer when a key of the plurality of keys has been pressed by a user.

15. 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of resetting the timer after the timer has stopped.

15. 15. A medical testing system comprising:
20 (a) an instrument for monitoring the electrical activity of a patient's heart;
(b) an illuminating component for illuminating the instrument, the instrument including:
25 (1) a component for selectively turning the illuminating component on and off; and
(2) a component for automatically turning the illuminating component off, after a predetermined period of time has elapsed.

16. 16. The system of claim 15, wherein the illuminating component includes at least one LED.

17. The system of claim 15, wherein the instrument includes a work surface and wherein the illuminating component illuminates the work surface.

18. The system of claim 15, further includes a supporting component engaging the instrument for supporting the illuminating component above the instrument.

19. The system of claim 17, wherein the instrument includes a keypad and wherein the illuminating component illuminates the keypad.

20. The system of claim 17, wherein the instrument further includes a printing component for printing on a medium a graphical waveform representing the electrical activity of the heart.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the illuminating component illuminates the medium as it moves along the work surface.

22. A computer program for performing a method comprising the steps of: activating an illuminating component positioned relative to an instrument for monitoring a characteristic of a patient, the instrument including a keypad having a plurality of keys;

determining if a key on the plurality of keys has been pressed by a user; and

automatically deactivating the illuminating component if a key of the plurality of keys has not been pressed within a predetermined period of time.

23. The computer program of claim 22, wherein the predetermined period of time is 60 minutes.

24. A medical testing system comprising:
(a) means for monitoring the electrical activity of a patient's heart;
(b) means for illuminating the instrument; the instrument including:
(1) means for selectively turning the illuminating component on and off;

~~(2) means for automatically turning the illuminating component off, after a predetermined period of time has elapsed.~~

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